

163 The data again are not entirely reliable because
842 of a tendency not to count deceased children
until urged. Almost always emotion was
manifested upon recalling a specific child.
Women were more commonly able to supply the
names of deceased children. It is the impres-
sion of the interviewers that the data presented
are fairly accurate for all children baptised but
that stillbirths and perhaps death before baptism
were not counted.²⁸

Although most Cherán informants believed
families were small through the small number
of childbirths, the data indicate an average of
5.2 births per woman. No case of a childless
woman was encountered in interviewing, al-
though some exist in Cherán. If the failure to
report stillbirths is taken into account, it is
probable that Cherán women would rank fairly
high in fertility. The small family size con-
sequently is due to deaths rather than to lack
of births. Data from the same families indi-
cated only 2.7 children living at the time the
data were collected, indicating nearly half of
all children born had already died. The data
are summarized in table 13.

165 Data on deaths for the years 1936, 1938,
1939, and part of 1940 are given in tables 14,
15, and 16. As might be expected, the highest
death rate is in children under 1 year of age
(probably higher than shown when unreported
stillbirths are taken into account). The second
highest rate is in the period from 1 to 9 years
of age. For adults, the periods from 30 to 39
years and 60 to 69 years appear to be the most
critical. Again, however, ages are only esti-
mates and must not be considered as accurate.

165 The table of deaths by causes (table 16)
759 should be considered primarily of interest in
showing the disease concepts prevalent in
Cherán. There were no doctors in Cherán at
the time these data were collected. Generally,
the cause of death was provided by the relative
registering the death, at the insistence of the
Secretary that he had to put down something
for his records to the State authorities.
[164] Epidemics of whooping cough and smallpox are
clearly recorded, however.

1959 ²⁸In taking a house census at Sertina, a neighboring town, the
interviewers called attention to the fact that a babe in arms had
not been included in the household total. Said the grandfather:
"That one is too new. One hardly knows yet whether it lives or
dies, so we do not count it."